

STRICTURES

ON THE

LETTER OF J. K. L.

ENTITLED

A VINDICATION OF THE RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL
PRINCIPLES OF THE IRISH CATHOLICS;

ADDRESSED TO

HIS EXCELLENCY THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY, K. G.
LORD LIEUTENANT GENERAL, AND GENERAL GOVERNOR OF
IRELAND, &c. &c.

In a Letter to the same Nobleman.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“REMARKS ON THE LATE MIRACLE, IN A LETTER TO
DOCTOR DOYLE.”

“And Micah said, As the Lord liveth, even what my God saith, that will I
speak.”—2 Chronicles xviii. 13.

DUBLIN:

R. M. TIMS, 85, GRAFTON-STREET.

—
1823.

BRIEF STRICTURES, &c.

MY LORD,

A LETTER to your Excellency, by J. K. L. entitled "A Vindication of the Religious and Civil Principles of the Irish Catholics," has lately issued from the press. As it appears to come from the pen of one who is a most influential member of that body, it deserves, at this time, the most serious consideration of statesmen, and above all of your Excellency, to whom our gracious Sovereign has confided the destinies of this portion of his empire. It is just, my Lord, that you should attend to all the complaints of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, as well as to the charges preferred against them. Indeed the most unexceptionable way of obtaining information about religious sects, is from themselves. The calumny of enemies gives a tinge to almost every principle. But when a sect comes forward, and through one who is known to speak the mind of his brethren, declares its sentiments, the statesman and the historian have a firm basis for their deductions. In judging of the principles of the Roman Catholics, a statesman will learn more from this Letter, than from whole volumes written by their adversaries. J. K. L. surely cannot be suspected of misrepresenting himself and his brethren. His production

must be of more use to open the eyes of his Majesty's Government to the imminent danger of the country, than the most intemperate statement and loudest complaints of those who are considered mere alarmists.

Permit me then, my Lord, to solicit the honour of your attention to a few strictures on the Letter of your correspondent. If I wrest his language, if I draw unfounded consequences, if I conjure up ghosts and goblins to alarm the timid, dismiss me from your presence as a visionary. I do not mean, my Lord, to exhaust your patience, and write a dissertation on every point of controversy suggested by the publication before me. Every part of the pamphlet deserves indeed full discussion, and I am convinced will have it; but let it be my part to draw the attention of your Excellency and the public to the mode of reasoning displayed in this extraordinary pamphlet. This appears to me unsound, and, in no ordinary degree, sophistical. Hear me, my Lord, whilst I establish this charge.

Even in the very title of the work we have a specimen of dexterous management. Is it in the compass of a letter that your Excellency's correspondent proposes a defence of the religious and civil principles of the Roman Catholics? Such a production could scarcely afford room for the titles of the points in controversy. The religious principles of his sect which he attempts to vindicate are a very few indeed. But this pompous title will serve a purpose. It will suffice to many for a real defence of the whole principles of the Roman Catholic Church.

The author reduces the accusations of his opponents to four charges. The first of these is, That their religion is antichristian, and so slavish a superstition as to unfit them for freedom. The latter part of this charge I leave for the discussion of politicians: with the former I have charged them, and if your Excellency's correspondent has repelled

it, I must stand convicted as a false accuser. But how has he repelled this charge? Why, they do not deny either the divine or the human nature of Christ, as those persons did whom the Apostle John designates Antichrists. But the author himself, as well as his brother Pastorini, considers Antichrist to be the same with the Man of Sin, spoken of by the Apostle Paul. If so, what is said of the latter must be true of the former. Now I have shewn in my letter to Doctor Doyle, that the Man of Sin spoken of 2 Thess. ii. 3—14. cannot possibly be any other than the Church of Rome, as no other Church on earth pretends to work miracles. Of the justness of this conclusion I can no more doubt than that two and two make four. What thinks your Excellency? The author complains that he has not been told, in the various productions to which he alludes, in what the antichristian opposition of his Church consists. Upon the subject of the late miracles, it was not the business of his opponents to shew this in detail. If he wishes to see this at full length, he may find it in a thousand volumes since the Reformation. “Of the reign of Antichrist,” says your Excellency’s correspondent, “I do confess that I know but little.” This confession, my Lord, from a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church, though it is meant to cast the reproach of impenetrable obscurity on the subject, I do assume as the strongest presumptive evidence of a secret misgiving of heart, and a conviction that the interests of the Roman Catholic religion are not likely to be served by the study of this part of the divine word. Were it thought possible to force it to serve that cause, or even to give it a slanting direction, there would be no confessions of ignorance on this point. The frantic attempt of Pastorini proves this. All the learning and subtlety of that Jesuit could not preserve him from appearing a fool, in attempting to give another application to this prophecy, and to ward his Church

from the sword of the Spirit in the book of Revelation. Even the doctors of his own religion appear now to be ashamed of his reveries. Convinced that it is impossible to assail us in this quarter, the devil has changed his mode of attack. If the system of Rome is the only thing to which this prophecy can be made naturally applicable, the policy of its defenders is to raise a cry of impenetrable obscurity, and to aim the shafts of ridicule at those who attempt to affix a definite application. This is the course that your Excellency's correspondent has thought proper to pursue. When Roman Catholics in general hear that so great a man can make nothing of the book of Revelation, and perceive that the study of it is not only vain but ridiculous, they will be a thousand times more effectually guarded from contagion, than if, with Pastorini, they were to go through this book, and force it to seal the damnation of all heretics.

This idea of the impenetrable obscurity of the book of Revelation has been of late unwarily adopted by some ill-judging Protestants, from the heat of their zeal for conciliation. 'The divine testimony must be supposed unintelligible, lest it should mar the harmony of brotherhood; but, my Lord, this was not the wisdom of the founders and greatest ornaments of the Church of England in every age. Her learned bishops and clergy have been above all others, distinguished for fixing the definite application of this prophecy to the abominations of the Church of Rome. Prophecies, my Lord, must, for obvious reasons, have a measure of obscurity until they are fulfilled: but to ridicule attempts to understand prophetic descriptions that God has commanded to be studied; to pronounce impenetrably dark, as this writer does, what God calls a revelation; to suggest that in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, it is impossible to know the system pointed out by the Apostles as a warning to Christians, is monstrously absurd and blasphemous.—

Look, my Lord, into that one passage to which I have referred, 2 'Thess. ii. 3—12. and say what difficulties do you find in the application of the Apostle's language? If the religion of Rome is not here pointed out, no picture ever represented the original.

With respect to the book of Revelation, the Spirit of God declares, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep these things which are written therein." Rev. i. 3. Again, "Behold I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." Rev. xxii. 7. Can they keep sayings, my Lord, that they do not understand? After describing the career of the beast who received the power of the dragon, the Spirit of God says, "If any man have an ear to hear let him hear." Rev. xiii. 9. Again, "Here is wisdom, let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast." Rev. xiii. 18.

Thus, my Lord, are Christians urged by Jehovah to the study of this book. Who is the man, then, that will dare to pronounce this enthusiasm and folly? Who will dare to call that madness which God calls wisdom? A thousand fools may have raved on this subject, and the attempts of the wise themselves may often have failed in minute applications and the exact fixing of dates; but that the strongly-marked features of the beast are all found in the Church of Rome, is as clear as that God made the heavens and the earth.

If the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe are denied by some, and ascribed to the devil by others, this writer consoles himself that this was the case with the miracles of Christ himself. Very true, my Lord; and if there was not better evidence that the works of Christ were performed by divine power, the charge could not be repelled by Christians. But

the works of Christ were such that his very enemies, being eye-witnesses, could not deny them to be from God. The cures of Prince Hohenlohe, even allowing them to be supernatural, are not beyond what I have shown the devil to be able, if permitted, to perform. Even this writer himself believes that some supernatural effects may be ascribed to the interposition of the spirit of darkness. His words are these :—" The persons for whom, and by whom, miracles are wrought, the means employed to produce them, the end and circumstances for which and in which they are presented to us, their number, as well as the substance of them, contribute to determine my judgment of the cause to which they are to be assigned,—whether to natural means, to the spirit of darkness, or to the power of God."—Page 15.

If, then, the spirit of darkness may be the author of some supernatural effects, nothing can be a decisive proof of divine interposition that is not superior to any power that the Scriptures shew Satan to possess, and that is not in accordance with truth already established by the miracles of Christ. No cause can be more likely to engage the exertions of the wicked one, than the support of the empire of the most destructive superstition that ever spread darkness and ruin over the world.

" I find," says this writer, speaking of the cures, " they resemble many of those wrought by our Redeemer or his Apostles." Is the devil such a bungler, my Lord, that in his miracles he would not imitate the works of Christ? Would he shew his cloven foot to those whom he meant to deceive? We are told further, " that the persons relieved were gifted with a lively faith in Christ." With a lively faith in Prince Hohenlohe and his Christ they were undoubtedly gifted; but of the Christ of God they must have been ignorant, else they would not fly for refuge to Saint

John Nepomuscene. The worshippers of Juggernaut have, doubtless, a lively faith, when they throw themselves under the wheels of the idol's carriage.

"Their illness such as was calculated to excite the compassion of him who has deigned to call himself our Father." p. 18. The Lord frequently allows, in his own inscrutable wisdom, many of his children to languish long, and die at last in the utmost pain, while many of the wicked live without sickness; and die without pain.

"The means employed to obtain the interposition of the Deity no other than prayer and sacrifice." Sacrifice! my Lord—the sacrifice of the Mass! From the beginning of the world there has been no miracle performed by divine power through such means. 'This is what stamps the whole as imposture or Satanic delusion. Nothing can be more ridiculous than the supposition that Almighty Power would perform miracles to confirm a doctrine so entirely impious, absurd, and unscriptural—a doctrine that, by representing Christ as sacrificed from day to day, continually overturns the faith of the Gospel.

But this sacrifice has been "offered up by a man, not so much distinguished by his rank as by the eminent piety which distinguishes his life." Had an angel from heaven offered a hog or a dog on the Jewish altar, it would have been an abomination to the Lord. Shall he then accept the idolatrous sacrifice of the Mass? I know nothing of the character of this prince; but I know, my Lord, that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, and that his ministers are transformed, when it suits his occasions, into the ministers of righteousness. 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. This wily Prince of darkness chooses his ministers with qualifications suitable to the work for which he employs them. He would be a mere botch in his trade were he to employ a debauchee to work miracles. He can preside at the revels of fashion-

able dissipation, dance with the fanatic on the Welch mountains, rave politics and blasphemy with Carlile and the English radicals, and work miracles with Prince Hohenlohe, for confirming and extending the empire of superstition. His austerity and monkish piety are more useful to his kingdom than open profligacy.

To those, my Lord, who have not fully considered this subject as it appears in the word of God, it will undoubtedly appear strange, that the Almighty Ruler of the world should give so much power to the wicked one, and that he should permit him to deceive the human race. But let it appear as it will, nothing but infidelity can deny the fact. To deny this is to deny the Bible. But in all instances in which Satan is permitted to deceive, God has left the deceived without excuse. They are given up to be hardened by Satan because they will not believe God. Thus it was with Pharaoh. When he would not yield to the works of God wrought by the hand of Moses, the magicians were permitted to imitate the miracles of the former in some instances, upon a small scale. An Egyptian priest might, at that time, have reasoned like your correspondent. "I find," he might have said, "the miracles of the magicians to resemble those of Moses, and to be performed by men of eminence and sanctity for the best of all purposes, the support of the religion of the country." If Pharaoh and his subjects were deceived they were inexcusable, for the works of the devil, by which they were deceived, were not equal to the works of God, to which they were opposed.

I will bring another instance to the recollection of your Excellency, from the case of Ahab. That rebellious king would not believe the true prophet of the Lord, but listened to the flattering encouragement of his four hundred false prophets. The Lord determined, through the deception of these wicked men, to bring him to ruin. The passage is

striking, and we shall quote it. “ And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another after that manner. Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil against thee.” 2 Chron. xviii. 19—22. Here we see, my Lord, that God permitted a wicked spirit to deceive this rebellious king, who would not hearken to the truth. But was he not without excuse? Thus it is, my Lord, that God has given up men to be deceived by the devil and the man of sin, when they would not receive the truth. This is the very reason assigned by God himself, 2 Thess. ii. 2. 10. If any man is deceived, he is inexcusable. The religion of the Bible and the religion of the church of Rome are as opposite as heaven and earth. The one declares salvation through the one perfect sacrifice of the Son of God; the other, through human merit and the most revolting superstitions. If the miracles of Christ are divine, the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe must be satanic. It is utterly impossible that true miracles can be brought to prove two contradictory systems. If the Gospel is true, the religion of Rome is false. How jealous, my Lord, is the Apostle Paul of the smallest addition to the Gospel? To make the most harmless rite necessary to salvation is, according to him, another Gospel, and makes those who receive it, with this view, debtors to do the whole law. Gal. v. 1. What then, my Lord, shall we say of the Church that has buried the Cross of Christ under mountains of superstition, and instead of direct-

ing perishing sinners only to the blood of Christ, that cleanses from all sin, has all heaven and earth, saints, angels, and men, at work to save sinners, and, after all, cannot accomplish it till they are purified after death in the fire of purgatory? Who, my Lord, shall dare to say that this is the Gospel of Christ? Are men more likely to find salvation in this endless round of superstitious observances than in the rites of Moloch? Are they more likely to find salvation under the penances of the cross, than under the wheels of the idol of Juggernaut? As long as I believe the faith of the Gospel of Christ to be salvation, so long I must declare that all humanly invented schemes are damnation. I cannot fault here, my Lord, however I may displease men. Let God be true and all men liars. It may be thought that my opinions are uncharitable; but if they are the truth of God, I dare not, I ought not to dissemble them. I declare them freely, not for the condemnation of any of my fellow creatures, but solely for their salvation.

I had said, my Lord, in my Letter to Docter Doyle, that from the authority of the word of God, Gal. i. 6—9, I would not believe an angel from heaven were he to vouch for the truth of the Roman Catholic religion. This he considers enthusiasm. Were I disposed to be angry, I would tell him that he does not seem to understand what enthusiasm means. My assertion may have the appearance of the boldest obstinacy of unbelief, and might be charged as suitable only to the mouth of a Hume; but to enthusiasm it is altogether antipodal. But, my Lord, I recognize the expression, not as a bold figure, but as strong literal truth. As I said before, so say I now again, if an angel from heaven were to appear before me, declaring that Popery is from God, I would not believe him. Down, false spirit, I would say, thou art fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning. God cannot have sent thee to contradict his Gospel: get thee

behind me, Satan; it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

The manner in which your Excellency's correspondent notices my Letter to Doctor Doyle discovers more artifice than candour. Two crazy enthusiasts, it seems, had overwhelmed him with their reveries and inspirations on the book of Revelation. With the effusions of these fanatical dreamers, the candid writer classes my production, and goodnaturedly dismisses me as a knave or a fool. From the wildness of the speculations of the fanatics, he finds a convenient pretence to take it for granted that all applications of these prophetic descriptions are vain and ridiculous. Now, my Lord, this is a consummate piece of generalship. Had he not noticed my letter at all, even his friends might have thought his cause suspicious. *But to repel any attack he knew was impossible! So far then from fairly meeting me in the field, he dare not once look me in the face.* He slides past me out of the field, with an expression of whining regret. This *management* gives a plausibility to his work to superficial readers; and to the bulk of his own class, not reading my letter, it will *be demonstration*.

Why then, my Lord, has this writer the effrontery to appeal as a victor in this controversy to the judgment of your Excellency, *when he has not dared to enter the lists with his opponent?* Why does he call his work a 'Vindication, &c.,' *when he has not even attempted to refute my charges?* My arguments are not only unanswered but unassailed. I have not a single man killed, wounded, or missing. I challenge the application of the severest logic to my reasoning. I will venture to meet the enemy, relying solely on any one of all the arguments which I have used. I defy any man to shew more enthusiasm in my applications of Scripture, than there is in the demonstrations of Euclid's

Elements. I do not even take it for granted that the Church of Rome *must* be intended, in those passages which speak of the Man of Sin, &c. To invalidate the force of miracles alleged to prove unscriptural doctrines, it is only necessary for me shew, that, under the Christian dispensation, it is predicted that the devil would give his power to some apostate church, to deceive the world by false miracles. If this is the case, the miracles of the Church of Rome, so far from proving her pretensions, bring her into suspicion. And from the nature of her doctrine, and the fact that no other church pretends to miracles, this suspicion becomes unavoidable conviction. *On the evidence of this simple statement, I will meet the enemy.* So far from indulging in speculations from impenetrably dark prophecy, I take nothing for granted that my opponent himself can refuse to concede. If the devil works miracles to deceive, why may not those of Prince Hohenlohe be such? To repel this, his friends must shew either that the works are above the power of the devil, or that the whole system of the Church of Rome is truth, and therefore unlikely to receive the assistance of Satan.

It is quite amusing, my Lord, to contrast the slight notice with which your correspondent honours my letter, with the full and ludicrous account which he gives of the productions of the two visionaries. With the latter he sports like a cat with a mouse before she kills it: he slinks away from me as if he had seen a ghost. He does not even inform his readers of the nature of my attack. Pretend what they will, my Lord, they would be right glad that I had *not* conjured up the devil in this business. Compared with this, it is quite mercy to meet them with imposture, imagination, and natural causes.

The next charge to which your Excellency's correspondent replies is, that Roman Catholics "entertain the design of

overthrowing the Established Church, and entering upon her possessions."

Now, my Lord, was there ever a purer specimen of jesuitical logic, than the reasoning employed in labouring this point? I pray your Excellency, mark the subtle artifice of this division. In repelling the second charge, he speaks of the design of overthrowing the Established Church, and in the third of the overthrowing of the Constitution. Now, my Lord, this is a very illogical division, for the third charge includes the second. The overthrow of the Church is implied in the overthrow of the Constitution. But in your Excellency's correspondent, I do not ascribe this to want of ability and skill to arrange his subject in a proper manner. The reason is obviously to serve his purpose. By this mode of arrangement, the Constitution to which he expresses his attachment, is a Constitution without the Church establishment. It is the radical Constitution that your correspondent so ardently loves. But, my Lord, is not the establishment of the Church as much a part of the British Constitution, as the throne of the monarch? Another might adore the Constitution if the kingly office were abolished; and a third, if the Parliament were discarded. But, my Lord, as long as the Constitution is what it is, when a man of candour expresses his attachment to it, he cannot believe that there never will be peace or prosperity till one half of it is destroyed. The man who seeks by arms or by words to overturn the Church establishment, seeks to overturn the Constitution of his country. What, my Lord, is the difference between your correspondent and General Rock in their partiality to the establishment of the Church? Why, the one professes to destroy the establishment by fire and sword, and the other by an act of Parliament. Can it be expected then, my Lord, that the members of the established Church,

should be willing to give power to those who avow that they would use it to destroy what they hold so dear? Is it justice to ascribe their conduct to malignity, intolerance, or a visionary imagination? Grant Roman Catholics all they ask, you may learn from your correspondent that it will be of no avail. He assures your Excellency, that "whilst titlies subsist, peace or concord will not be re-established in Ireland." This part of the subject furnishes much matter for reflection to the statesman, but I leave it, as it does not concern me.

The last charge to which your Excellency's correspondent replies, is "that of intolerance towards the professors of other creeds; and an obstinate opposition to the diffusion of knowledge, and the progress of education."

With respect to the first part of this charge, I will never frown on them for sending me to hell. But whatever may be said of the demerit of the sentiment, this writer cannot be too severely blamed for want of candour in his mode of defence. It is a genuine specimen of evasive logic. The charge, my Lord, against the Church of Rome is, that she confines salvation exclusively to herself. Now, a reply to this might be given in a single sentence, had the writer intended plain dealing. *It is true, or it is not true.* But instead of this he now admits it, now seems to deny it; this moment defends it with proofs and parallels at great length, the next rejects the imputation of it with warm indignation. How he labours and struggles to maintain the doctrine of the Church, and avoid its odium! No Roman Catholic has ever more fully recognized the offensive opinion; yet by his distinctions, and subtilties, and parallels, and professions of liberality, almost every careless reader will be quite satisfied that this charge is not more justly applicable to them, than to all other denominations. It is this disingenuous logic that my soul detests in the explanation and proof of Roman

Catholic tenets. One can never be sure but in declarations seemingly plain, there are not some secret reserves, some delusive distinctions, that give quite a different turn to the meaning.

Let the writer express himself in his own language. After defining, and proving, and recriminating, he concludes in the following manner :—" Thus, my Lord, stands the account of intolerance between the professors of our several creeds ; and why we should anticipate the judgment of God, and hate each other for the sake of Christ who died for us all, is to me, I confess, as unintelligible, as the imputation of intolerance against Catholics appears to me unjust."— Does he not here, my Lord, find fault with those who anticipate the judgment of God with respect to others ? But according to the doctrine which he was previously attempting to establish, the Church of Rome anticipates the damnation of all who will not submit to her claims, except some blessed idiots who can plead invincible ignorance. Does not the writer appear here indignantly to repel as unjust, the imputation of intolerance with respect to his Church ? Would not any one who should read this conclusion, without looking at what precedes, be fully satisfied that this learned dignitary of the Church of Rome, as I suppose him to be, utterly rejects the foul imputation of believing exclusive salvation ?— Does he not assert that the imputation of intolerance against Catholics appears to him unjust ?

Let us take another specimen, my Lord, calculated to induce the same conviction : " The Lord awards judgment without mercy, to him who has not mercy, and commands us not to judge a foreign servant who stands or falls to his master ; but who, he adds, will stand ; and were a Christian, notwithstanding this denunciation and this command, to condemn his brother who differs from him. I would have

less hopes of his acceptance with the Father of all, than of the heathen or publican who never heard of Christ." Will not every one who reads this unconnectedly, conclude that the writer abhors the doctrine objected to his Church? He not only seems to reject it, but even to doubt the acceptance with God of any who hold it. Can it be credited that this very writer has laboured, in the same breath, to establish the doctrine which he would here be understood to abhor? This cannot be reconciled in any other way than by supposing that he means some erring brother in the Church, or some brother idiot invincibly ignorant. He surely cannot mean some brother heretic.

Another specimen will put the liberality of Roman Catholics beyond question. "The writer of this letter, my Lord, (and he speaks of himself with reluctance,) may be considered as expressing the opinions and feelings of every well educated Catholic in the empire; he has been, from his infancy, and is still connected with Protestants, by ties of friendship, of affection, of good offices, and of blood; he has been attached to them with all the sincerity which could fill an Irish heart. In his intercourse with men, he has never distinguished them by their creeds; in the discharge of his ministry, he has never preached a sermon upon controversy; still less has he, at any time, used arguments or influence in private, to make proselytes to his creed; and though from time to time he has received many individuals to the profession of his own faith, he has sought their conversion only by expounding the truths of the gospel in public, and endeavouring, as far as God enabled him, to exhibit it in his conduct. Why those who think and act thus should be arraigned for intolerance, it is difficult to understand."

As to the matter of this passage, there is much that I not only approve but admire. Though I know nothing of the

writer, this shews him to me as an amiable man. He seems here to forget his religion for a moment, and opens the sluices of nature. I do honour the feelings of an Irish heart, though its owner is arrayed against me in the field of religious controversy. There is no political privilege which I would not grant to such a man, as far as consistent with public tranquillity. The conduct he describes as exhibited by himself towards Protestants, is that which I have ever exemplified in mine towards Roman Catholics. But he goes too far, when out of delicacy he abstains from controversy. Love itself ought to make him thunder eternally in our ears. I shall love him the better for his faithfulness, although I shall oppose his doctrine. I repeat it again and again, my Lord, I love the Roman Catholics; it is my love to them that impels me plainly to tell them the truth. I beseech them, my Lord, in the bonds of Jesus Christ, to forsake their refuges of lies, and fly for refuge to the hope set before them in the blood of Christ. This will wash them from all sin, without penances, without purgations, without any of the innumerable devices of human invention. My zeal is not that they shall join my denomination. If they throw off every trust but that of the gospel, and believe for salvation in the blood of the Saviour only, I shall rejoice, though they should never appear under any denomination of Protestants. I speak severely, not to wound them, but to heal them. Can I be silent, when I behold before me six millions of my countrymen sunk in the most soul-destroying superstition? Can I speak too plainly, in pointing out to them the way to heaven? Even if I am wrong in my views, there is no just ground of offence. Whether I am wise or mad, I know I love all men.

But however amiable the writer appears, with respect to the point in hand, of what use is the declaration contained

in the foregoing quotation? Does it prove that the writer and every well-educated Roman Catholic do not believe that salvation exclusively belongs to the Church of Rome? If it does not prove this, it is irrelevant. And that it is meant to imply this, is clear from the conclusion drawn from it in the close of it. Why are they charged with intolerance? I will tell him why. Because he has just been attempting to prove that the doctrine usually ascribed to his Church on this point is warranted by Scripture, and innumerable other authorities. Astonishing! my Lord. Does he inquire why they should be charged with intolerance, after having defined the term, avowed the thing, and justified it from the Scriptures, and by the example of all other religions, and sects of Christianity? Is it possible ever to ascertain the meaning of such men, when it is their interest to deceive? From their mental reservations, their equivocations, and their subtle distinctions, they can affirm and deny in the same breath.

Now turn back with me, my Lord, and take a fresh glance at those passages in your correspondent's letter, in which he justifies intolerance. If I do not convict him to your Excellency's satisfaction, put me on Cobbett's gridiron. "Religious intolerance, my Lord, is a species of intolerance distinct in itself; it would appear to be one of the first consequences flowing from the idea of a revelation, and though we cannot easily prove this *a priori*, it has the second best kind of argument in its favour, namely, that wherever there existed a real or pretended revelation, there the doctrine of exclusion was allied with that of salvation." What think you of this, my Lord? Is not this an avowal and a justification of the doctrine that he elsewhere denies? I shall not trouble your Excellency nor myself with any of his instances, but those that have authority, were they well

founded. He tells us that Moses founded his law on the doctrine of exclusion. This assertion is incapable of proof. Salvation was not confined to the Jewish Church. Many believed to salvation in the Messiah promised to the Jews, who never were circumcised, nor admitted among them. "Christ said there was but one fold." But this one fold is made up of Christians of all denominations, without excluding believers, who, like the seven thousand Israelites in the days of Elijah, may, amidst the idolatry of the Church of Rome, be found not to bow the knee to Baal. "Paul preached there was but one faith." Yes, my Lord, but this one faith is possessed by Christians of all denominations. "From the very nature, then, unquestionably,—from the very origin of divine revelation, a union of true believers, or exclusive salvation, or religious intolerance, (for these names designate the same thing,) has always been established and believed." What think you of this, my Lord? Is not this a full recognition of intolerance?

But the boldest stroke of Jesuitical artifice is yet to come. The Protestant Churches are all equally guilty of this offensive doctrine. Don't be startled, my Lord, your own Church and your ownself, are as guilty of this as the Church of Rome. I am convinced, my Lord, that you never knew that you believed this, till this writer told you. Yes, the Thirty-nine Articles contain this doctrine, and I am sure your Excellency sincerely receives them as your creed. Hear the author speaking of the new Churches after the Reformation: he says: "But when they had formed their new establishments they all published their confessions or creeds, and in each of them as much, and as expressly as in the old Church, we find this doctrine of exclusion." Now, is this true?—No, my Lord, it is false. But there is a sense in which Jesuitical morality will make it true. The foundation which I

presume the writer has for his assertion is substantially this : The Churches and individuals mentioned, declare that there is salvation only through faith in Jesus Christ. This is the sort of exclusive salvation that Protestants avow. The charge against Roman Catholics is ; that they confine salvation to their own Church—a thing that finds no parallel in the opinion of Protestants. I dwell on this nonsense, my Lord, not from any importance that can be in refuting it, but to call the attention of our Chief Governor to the shameless artifices of the defenders of Popery, that he may perceive how to appreciate their sincerity in their intercourse with him. What hold, my Lord, can we have of such men, when one so conspicuous and talented as your correspondent appears to be, degrades himself by such uncandid sophistry ? He well knows that Protestants never held this opinion in which it is held by his Church. Yet by a disingenuous manœuvre he attempts to divide the odium of a doctrine, which to many Protestants is the most offensive part of the religion of Rome. Indeed when it serves their purpose, Roman Catholics shew that they understand this perfectly. One of their strongest arguments to make proselytes is : “ That Protestants themselves allow that Roman Catholics may be saved, but that they do not grant that Protestants can be saved, therefore their religion is at all events the safest.”

I shall not take notice of the charge against the clergy of the Church of Rome, of being hostile to education. The discussion of it would occupy too much space, and is not to the purpose of my present letter. I shall confine myself to a few observations on the writer’s reasoning with respect to the right of the people to read the Scriptures. Nor shall I enter into an examination of his arguments on this point. To refute all the sophistry on this head, would take a tract by itself. I shall merely glance at his wily logic, that so happily recon-

ciles all contradictions. As a General yourself, my Lord, you must be convinced that your correspondent has evinced no inconsiderable skill in drawing up his lines. With consummate address, he has given an appearance of numbers and strength to a very feeble force. Instead of coming at once to the charge, he amuses the enemy by admitting every thing that he could demand. Nay he enters into a regular and lengthened proof of the thing which he is charged as denying. Apostles, and Fathers, and Saints, and Doctors, are brought forward to prove what nobody but his own Church ever thought of denying. This, my Lord, you must confess, is very skilful generalship. After this, who dare charge the Church of Rome with hostility to reading the Scriptures?" Ah! my Lord, read on a little farther, and you will find all this substantially overturned. A right is granted in theory, which by modifications and exceptions may seldom or never be enjoyed. The people have a right to read the Scriptures, but the Clergy have a right, as often as they please, to keep them from reading. It does me no good, my Lord, to tell me that I have a right to eat, if others have a paramount right to keep me from eating.

I shall perhaps take another occasion to anatomize the sophistry by which this writer makes void the authority of God in his injunctions to read the Scriptures. At present one only of his illustrations shall be noticed. Your Excellency, he says, would recommend the suspension of the Habeas Corpus in a time of rebellion. True, my Lord, but to recommend the suspension of that Act, and to suspend it are two very different things. Though your Excellency is the Lord Lieutenant General, and General Governor of Ireland, you have no more authority to suspend that Act, than the meanest subject of his Majesty. No authority can suspend it, but that which made it, and that which can abolish it. You

can *recommend*, my Lord, but these audacious God-defying rebels, by their own authority *suspend*. To what a fearful retribution would it expose your Excellency, to suspend the Habeas Corpus by your own authority? What a tremendous judgment then awaits these presumptuous men, who have invaded the sovereignty of the Almighty and trampled on the most invaluable rights of their fellow-creatures whom they call their children? They assume a right that God never delegated—a right of suspending his own laws, according to their own wisdom. They have usurped the throne of the Almighty—nay they have exalted themselves above all that is called God, for in their dispensations and indulgencies they do what God himself, in consistency with his character, cannot do. They forbid marriages that God permits, and grant dispensations, sanctioning marriages between the uncle and niece—an abomination that would defile Sodom. This, my Lord, is only a sample of these reasons on the authority of which I have declared from 2 Thess. 2. 3.—12., and other passages of Scripture, that the Church of Rome is the MAN OF SIN, and that her miracles must be the miracles of Satan. I must speak out, my Lord, I must tell six millions of my unhappy countrymen that they are enslaved by a superstition invented by the Devil. Their teachers are talking to them of chains, and oppression, and cruelty, and Egyptian bondage. I wish to deliver them from the bondage of Satan. These are the chains, which it is their temporal and eternal interest to break. I have no political cause to serve by opposing them. I wish the permanency of the British Constitution, because in its fall, I perceive the fall of every earthly thing valuable in the eyes of a Christian. In its ruin I view the insecurity of life, and the loss of religious liberty. But to share every blessing of life with Roman Catholics, with Turks, with Jews, with Infidels, I am perfectly satisfied. To deny any civil or politi-

cal right, when it involves no danger to the community, is religious persecution. But if the Constitution is essentially Protestant, why should Roman Catholics or Dissenters of any kind, be kept in eternal excitement, and hunted on to deeds of blood, by the halloo of ambitious teachers and demagogues attempting to effect a change ?

But, my Lord, with what feelings of indignation, must your Excellency receive the letter of a man, who in an address to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, has dared to revile the clergy of the Established Church, and to recommend the abolition of the establishment itself ! Has he dared to suggest to the representative of the King, the expediency,—nay the necessity of abolishing an establishment that the King is sworn to protect ?

That God may bless your Excellency, and direct the councils of our beloved Sovereign, is the constant prayer of

Your Excellency's

Most obedient Servant.

October 31st.

